

AGENDA ITEM: Telecommunications Infrastructure

ISSUE TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD AT THIS MEETING: Consideration of funding for Z39.50 server software grants.

RECOMMENDED MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION BY THE BOARD: I move that the Library of California Board direct its Chief Executive Officer to allocate Library of California funds not to exceed \$75,000 to continue the Z39.50 Server Software grant program for 2000/2001.

BACKGROUND:

This request continues the Cycle 3 grant process for 10 additional libraries. Eleven applications have been approved since the June Library of California Board meeting (Exhibit A) and one other is currently in process and is pending approval for Cycle 3. \$30,000 in funding remains to grant four additional grants

Staff will continue to promote grant availability through communications with the Regional Library Networks. These additional grants will use the same application form used since the beginning of Cycle 3.

A strong focus of the Library of California is the development and support of a telecommunications network to enable all libraries to share their resources with each other. Z39.50 is a protocol that allows for the searching of one or more library online catalogs over the Internet, regardless of the proprietary software and hardware on each local computer system. The Board's decision to continue and expand the software support and server access programs is facilitating the development of a network of virtual library catalogs that by California library users can access. It is critical that this network be developed and maintained to establish a statewide database that reflects the most current holdings of California's libraries and to support sharing of resources for all Californians.

GENERAL OVERALL PROGRAM UPDATES:

CURRENT STATUS:

Z39.50 Server Software Grants

The purpose of funding the development of Z39.50 connectivity is to establish the infrastructure necessary to create a virtual statewide database representing the

holdings of California libraries. Such a virtual database is an important component of a cluster of access services envisioned in the Library of California Act.

Z39.50 is a protocol that allows for the simultaneous searching of one or more library online catalogs over the Internet, regardless of the proprietary software and hardware on each local computer system. A problem with the use of the standard is the variation in implementation by each vendor, leading to inconsistent searching results across different catalogs. The report *Linked Systems Study Update with Recommendations for the Future* by Joan Frye Williams recommended that the California State Library participate in the review of a commonly agreed Z39.50 implementation profile. Recently staff have been invited to join the National Information Standards Organization (NISO) Committee for the development of a US National Profile based, in part, on the international profile recently adopted by the International Standards Organization (ISO). William Moen of the University of North Texas will be chair of this committee. Staff will pay particular attention to the issues and problems discussed in Ms. Williams' report and intend to communicate the work of the committee with all in the state who work with Z39.50.

Support for Z39.50 access to library catalogs has been provided by both Library of California and CLSA funds. Staff have worked to coordinate the access information for both of these programs.

Update on Cycle 3 Z39.50 Server Software Grant Applications

At its June 2000 meeting the Board directed its Chief Executive Officer to continue to offer a Z39.50 server software reimbursement program for libraries who meet the eligibility requirements for participation in the Library of California and the technical requirements that promote open access to library catalogs via Z39.50. Funds for fifteen \$7500 grants were allocated. Since the June Board meeting eleven grants have been awarded, bringing the total sixty one grants. One grant is pending at this time. \$30,000 in funding remains to grant four additional grants

Applicants are now required to submit copies of their Regional Library Network membership applications as part of the grant process. Once the Regional Library Networks are in place network membership will be one of the requirements of the grant. Technology surveys of LoC members planned by a number of the regions should provide data on the level of need for additional Z39.50 grants.

Staff continues to work with grantees and vendors to resolve technical issues and keep data on access to the Z39.50 servers current. An electronic discussion list has been created for those working on Z39.50 access and to share information about the proposed US National Profile for Z30.50.

Telecommunication Infrastructure Grants

In April the Board authorized the expenditure of up to \$2,262,000 to support project grants for regional telecommunications infrastructure leading to the establishment of

regional library catalog access, electronic interlibrary loan, and electronic patron authentication.

These grants have been awarded to the Regional Network Planning Groups and are in progress. Quarterly reporting for each grant had not yet been received at the time of this report. Objectives for each regional grant are briefly summarized below.

Cascade Pacific *Connecting to the Millenium, Phase II*

Acquire a regional server to manage traffic between libraries and to implement a regional interlibrary loan system.

Golden Gateway *Regional Resource Sharing Initiative*

Conduct an evaluation study and implement portal software to connect three disparate CLSA system servers (MOBAC, NBCLS, & PLS). Expand NBCLS Supersearch system to seven additional libraries, the majority to be school and special libraries (funded by a separate grant).

Sierra Valley *SVLN: Staying Connected*

Expand the current Systems' technology plan to incorporate libraries of all types within the planning region and develop minimum standards for connectivity. Support the ongoing costs of the servers, improvements of existing Z39.50 connections and server performance, and the development of an automated ILL system.

Arroyo Seco *Technology Connection Project III*

Continue an LSTA project to install a gateway and interlibrary loan system in the MCLS/SLS cooperative library systems. The ten additional libraries in this project will include at least two libraries from the South State System, and three non-public libraries from somewhere in the region

Tierra Del Sol *Tierra Libraries Connect*

Fund consultant study to develop a detailed plan to implement regional access and resource sharing. Start implementation of consultant's recommendations.

Heartland *Heartland Resource Sharing System*

Expand the gateway and interlibrary loan system currently operated by the San Joaquin Valley Library System (SJVLS) on behalf of its member public libraries to include other types of libraries in the region.

Gold Coast *Cat-a-Link Gold*

Implement a gateway server and electronic interlibrary loan system to support public access to library catalogs and materials. Public access via remote Internet browsers and patron-initiated interlibrary loan are part of the project design. This project also includes remote patron authentication.

Technology planning and implementation activities are integral to the development of each region. Staff are monitoring these processes to be sure that all members are aware of the services that are available to them and have the opportunity to participate.

Telecommunications Infrastructure Standards

At the June 2000 LoC Board meeting the Board adopted criteria for the regional telecommunications infrastructure. Included in those criteria was the stipulation that Regional Library Networks use the Z39.50 protocol as the access protocol for their telecommunications infrastructure programs. Membership in the Regional Library Network and the ability to support the appropriate technologies was also one of the criteria for the infrastructure.

Among the applications received for the California Telecommunications Infrastructure grants was a proposal to utilize the INN-Reach system software developed by Innovative Interfaces Inc.(III) for a number of libraries in the Golden Gateway Library Network. The INN-Reach system creates a distributed union catalog for all member systems, includes real time circulation status and enables automated management of lending with local libraries.

Staff reviewed all applications from regions for these grants mindful of the policy and direction of the Board for the telecommunications infrastructure of the Library of California. An evaluation of the Golden Gateway application for the INN-Reach proposal found that INN-reach does not utilize Z39.50 protocol and therefore limits participation to those libraries who had purchased automation software from Innovative Interfaces Inc. The proposal was not approved since it did not conform to the open, multi-platform model as delineated in the criteria.

Proponents of that particular proposal will communicate their concern about the evaluation of their application at the November 2000 meeting. Exhibit B provides documents related to their concerns.

CLSA

In addition to the Z39.50 server grants, the LoC Board uses CLSA funds to subsidize the ongoing cost of Z39.50 access to public library catalogs (\$500 per year). It also subsidizes the ongoing cost of Z39.50 Gateway Client systems that are managed by California Cooperative Library Systems (\$5,000 per year).

Other programs of Interest to the Board

E-Rate Program

The Schools and Libraries Division (SLD) of the Universal Service Administrative Company (USAC) provides affordable access to telecommunications services for all eligible schools and libraries in the United States. The USAC is a not-for-profit

corporation appointed by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to ensure that the benefits of telecommunications services reach students and communities across the country. Funded at up to \$2.25 billion annually, the Program provides discounts on telecommunications services, Internet access and internal connections.

A recent study by the SLD indicates that schools are participating in the program at a much higher rate than libraries. The complex application procedure may deter some public library institutions that lack sufficient administrative staff to dedicate to the process.

The California State Library is responsible for the approval of technology plans from each applicant public library. Updated technology planning forms and instructions will be posted to the CSL web site to improve access to these forms and to broaden awareness of the opportunities afforded by the E-Rate program to libraries.

RELATED ISSUE TO COME BEFORE THE BOARD IN THE FUTURE: Development of Regional Telecommunications programs.

Relevant Committee: Support Services
Staff Liaison: Ira Bray